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VOL. XXI, NO. 85—ELEVENTH YEAR.

BRIDGEPORT, CONN., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1893.

EIGHT PAGES. ONE CENT.

AN INTERESTING LEGEND.

About the Burial of Captain Kidd's Treasure,
THE INVASION OF STRATFORD.

Said to Have Been Threatened in the Year 1696.

(By N.O.Kidder, Esq.)

The following story of Captain Kidd, in all of its multifarious phases, carries with it the charm of romance. Equal to any thing to be found in the pages either of history or fiction, and although his individuality does not, bear the endorsement of historical data—tradition has adopted him for her own, and sheds the glamour of realism about his name, in a degree, that all, except a student of modern history, accept his personality as a veritable historical figure, which for the past two centuries and will forevermore carry with it recollections of an eventful night, that cannot but curdle the blood, of those, of those of the inhabitants of the sequestered hamlet of Stratford, who are still living, and fortunate enough to have its terrors "survived."

In the year A.D., 1696 two citizens of Stratford went down to "Point no Point" to dig a mess of clams. The products of that locality, we might here say parenthetically, being celebrated both in "story and song." But there is one peculiarity about the "Point no Point" clam, i. e.—its inherent aversion to being captured at any other time than that of an extreme low stage of a perigee tide; a fact indeed, with which our two "clammers" seemed to be perfectly familiar, hence they took the precaution before starting to scan the pages of a copy of "Middlebrook's almanac", and wherein they discovered that the same would occur at just that moment on the night in question, when the hands pointed at the numerals 12 on the dials of their Waterbury watches.

Thus, being fully equipped, they started forth, and upon arriving at their scene of action, found the tide in exactly the condition predicted by the "oracle."

The night was dark and gloomy. Black lowering clouds hung like a pall from the vaulted dome of heaven. But undismayed they set to work, and did not cease until each saw his reward in a brimming basket of the luscious bivalves, which in point of size and plumpness at least could make the optics of even Julius Pfau dance a "can-can."

Having now labored unceasingly for fully an hour, in order to avail themselves of all the advantages of the tidal conditions, they thought to rest awhile before starting for home. So seating themselves upon a drift log, which rested upon the beach they soon became absorbed in friendly conversation.

They had not long been thus seated, however, when the sweet strains of some musical instrument—the character of which they could not divine—came floating

over the waters, and greeted their ears. They listened attentively, meanwhile the enchanting music coming nearer and nearer, and now with vocal accompaniment, the burden of whose lay, as nearly as they were able to distinguish it, being somewhat as follows:—

My name was Capt. Kidd,
When I sailed, when I sailed
God's laws I did forbid
When I sailed, when I sailed.

Now we shall not attempt to conjecture what must have been the feelings of the lonely listeners, when they heard the name of the reckless and blood thirsty pirate, whose exploits with all their terrors, they had in times past so often seen graphically recounted in the columns of THE BRIDGEPORT EVENING POST.

Perchance, they only ascribed the nocturnal episode to the wiles of some roystering oystermen, who were just returning from a successful poaching expedition to the oyster beds of Capt. Jack French. But, nevertheless, there they sat transfixed, as it were, the victims of some strange and subtle influence, akin possibly to that of the charm of a snake, upon its hapless, prey.

However, just then the music ceased the spell became broken, and our heroes recovered their normal condition of mind sufficiently to discuss in a vague way the portent of the strange events of the night; when suddenly, like an apparition or mirage from out of the "Egyptian" darkness, that hovered o'er the bosom of the deep, they descried the outlines of a graceful ship, with its vast cloud of canvas unfurled, and which was deeper in its inky blackness than the atmosphere that enveloped it, and when no more than quarter of a league from shore, they heard a voice of sonorous compass, giving orders to cast anchor and furl sails.

The order being obeyed in less time seemingly than it takes to relate it. And then, following in quick succession from the same source, in even more mandatory and impressive tones, the order to lower the lifeboat and convey the "chest of gold" to yon Long Beach, and bury it deep; deep; within its fertile sands.

Now as to just what the feelings of our midnight clammers of Point-no-point may have been, while confronted, with the latter phase of their nocturnal vigil, tradition avereth not: but suffice it to say, that they were now thoroughly convinced that their visitor was none other than the veritable Capt. Kidd.

So starting off as fast as their quaking limbs and palpitating hearts would allow they reached the village, and lost no time in sounding the alarm of

THE ARRIVAL OF CAPT. KIDD

at Long Beach, and prophesying that ere the dawn of day Stratford would be laid in ashes, its men, women and

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children murdered, their treasures of gold and silver plate and other bric a brac looted and buried [sic] deep, deep, within the sands of some lonely desert - Long Beach. It is unnecessary to suggest here, that, as a sequence, greatest excitement and consternation prevailed: in short the good people of Stratford were quite shaken up; but, however, Capt. Kidd failed to materialize, as predicted, and in the course of a few days the people regained their usual status of equanimity. But still there existed in the minds of many a feeling that Capt. Kidd was still lurking in the neighborhood—only awaiting a favorable opportunity to swoop down and despoil them of their dearest treasures; and as a result it was decided to call a town meeting for the purpose of discussing the advisability of organizing a militia company, or "Hum guard" for the better protection of the village.

Such meeting was duly called and Judge Morehouse appointed, moderator. It was voted to organize said company and to impress into its service, all male citizens ranging from 18 to 80 years of age, who were the owners of any death dealing weapon from a clam hoe to a flint lock rifle, together with a few charges of suitable ammunition. Again did all jog along serenely until one day, just before sunset, Seymour Wells, one of Stratford's oldest and brightest citizens was returning home from Bridgeport by the way of Pea Lane; and while jogging leisurely along and casting a furtive glance over his right shoulder in the direction of Long Island sound, he beheld, to his surprise and dismay, a vessel anchored off Point No Point, which bore upon its bulwarks, in immense golden letters the name "Lenoir," and this he at once concluded, was the veritable pirate ship.

So whipping up his ancient and spavined steed, in a manner that would have paralyzed John Gilpin with laughter he "eventually" reached the Village, where he lost no time in imparting to the people a full and complete knowledge of all that he had just seen, and which, it is needless to say, set the town into a state of excitement and trepidation hardly secondary to that of the first eventful night of a few days before; and again naught would pacify the "good citizens" of Stratford, but to call another "town meeting" for the purpose of taking further action.

Such meeting was accordingly called, and it was "Resolved: That a committee of three citizens, of known prowess and veracity be appointed, whose duty it should be to ascend some elevated position overlooking Long Island Sound and Long Beach, and with the aid of a spy glass, determine whether ye said hateful pirate ship of ye said Capt. Kidd had yet left her moorings off ye said Long Beach and due report make to said meeting," such committee being comprised of Sheriff Clarkson, Deputy

Sheriff Charley Curtis, and Constable Charles E. Stagg.

Said committee being composed of officers of the law, it was voted that they should act under their respective legal functions, as in such cases made, and provided, and that, should they deem it necessary, telephone over to Chief Marsh of Bridgeport police force to detail an officer to arrest said Capt. Kidd, place him in jail, and forthwith notify the Stratford authorities of such arrest, and hold the prisoner subject to their orders.

Now to revert to the scenes being enacted at Point-no-point immediately after "our clammers" had taken their somewhat precipitous departure and by the way, leaving their "catch" behind them, Capt. Kidd came ashore to "supervise" the "internment" of the "chest of gold," and after which, while strolling about with placid mien and self-satisfied air, admiring the beauties of the place, its fertile soil, prolific plum-bushes, ancient groves of massive trees with their wealth of foliage, and its - Midway Piasance; verily thought he, this is a spot, endowed with all that nature and art could possible bestow.

Then taking from its concealment about his person, a bottle of Meriden "Hop Beer" extracted its cork, and tipping the vessel containing the effervesing [sic] beverage to his mouth, took a profound draft and then pouring out upon the ground the remainder.

Saying in deep and impressive tones "I hereby christen thee, Pleasure Beach, Fairy Land of America".

Now turning about with the apparent purpose of retiring to his ship his eyes chanced to light upon the two baskets of clams, ah! ha! ha! ejaculated, with some thing of a tragic emphasis, "I behold before me the makings of a feast fit for the gods."

Then straightway calling to his colonel steward, Dabney Christian to come ashore at once and take those two baskets of "Point No Points" down to old Pop Holmes and tell him to stuff and bake them in his "best style," and have' them ready by one o'clock sharp, as he, Kidd, had invited to dine with him that day, several distinguished individuals, namely Walter Goddard, Esq., collector of the port of Point No Point; Zalmon Goodsell, Esq., president of board of trade of Point No Point and Capt.. John McNeil, harbor master of Point No Point.

Now before bringing our little "legend" to a close there is one object in connection therewith that we desire to revert to and that is the Militia company or "hum" guard by saying that as a mark of appreciation of its efficiency and courage during a period "that tried men's souls" the good people of Stratford endowed it with the suggestive title of company "K"(idd), and which it bears with becoming dignity and pride, even to the present day.